

engaging in cultural divisiveness and the always dynamic political rhetoric. I believe that Congressman Gutierrez had the right to denounce the violations for the following three reasons: (a) anyone of Puerto Rican descent or with family alive or deceased on the Island should care about their people; (b) given the fact that around 46 percent of the population depends on federal assistance, any American that pays federal taxes is a shareholder for the well-being of the people of the territories; (c) lastly, any member of the human race has the right to denounce negligent human treatment, as we are doing for Libya.

It is disappointing when politically biased commentaries like the ones made by Mr. Rafael Rodriguez on his recent op-ed calling Congressman Gutierrez "a paradoxical obstructionist" are made. I believe Congressman Gutierrez was trying to shed some light on the dark shadows of social deterioration that our people are facing. This social deterioration is the result of desperation and fear that plagues our people. It is said that in Puerto Rico you cannot live, you can only survive (unless you are part of an elite that controls the political and economic channels). It is this elite that believe they have the right to dictate what the people want or need. It is this elite that hide behind the face of congressional processes to manipulate the political outlook of the Island. It is this elite that engage in manipulating the information instead of exposing the truth and generating trust. It is this elite that continues to enlarge the gap between Puerto Ricans on the mainland and those that remain on the Island. It is this elite that call those who are trying to defend the true elements of democracy and human respect obstructionist.

The issues of the Americans in Puerto Rico and the territories are continuously overlooked by the congressional collective. Even Presidents neglect to mention the people of the territories in their State of the Union speeches. So we are very hypersensitive about our place in the world, which in turn fuels the political philosophy frenzy that has become our white whale, the status of the Island. Although I have my own personal philosophy for the Island, I'm bound to protect the neutral integrity of the organization that represents the voice of the entire community inside the beltway. It is our mission to enhance the social and economic well-being of our 8 million plus constituents and nothing is more divisive than the status issues. We are in favor of a fair and executable process for self determination, and we also believe that for that process to be legitimate we have a principled responsibility to act civilized and respect all views. Change can only be accomplished when trust is at the core.

As the future of our Island we call on all students, educators, and administrators to hold each other to a higher standard. Respect those that want to express their frustrations and protect those that want to exercise their right to an education. To all local government institutions, we encourage dialogue, tolerance, professionalism, and personal restraint; for it is your duty to protect a functioning society. To our elected officials, engage in integrative processes for the benefit of your constituents and not for personal political gain. Only then will we be able to call ourselves both American citizens and responsible citizens of the world.

HONORING KARMA GAETANO HADJIMICHALAKIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to recognize Karma Hadjimichalakis.

Up until recently, Karma was the principal lecturer in business economics and finance at the University of Washington Foster School of Business. She was the faculty director of the Pacific Rim Bankers Program, and she was the Evert McCabe Faculty Fellow. She was also my professor while I was earning my Executive MBA.

Last Monday, February 21, Karma passed away after a long illness, and as her student, I wanted to acknowledge her incredible accomplishments, both professional and personal, over the course of an extraordinary life.

Born on January 21, 1944 in Utica, New York, Karma was educated at nearby Elmira College and earned master's and doctorate degrees at the University of Rochester. She joined the faculty at the University of Washington in 1970, initially in the department of economics, and then at the Foster School of Business.

The turning point in her career was a 2-year stint as Visiting Economist at the Federal Reserve Board from 1980 to 1982. In her work with the banking section of the Fed's Division of Research and Statistics, Karma developed the ability to provide penetrating analysis that paints an accurate assessment of the current economic situation. In other words, she learned to find meaning in the disparate data.

Karma's time at the Fed also led her to realize that teaching was her true calling. She returned to the University of Washington with a new insider's expertise in the inner workings of the Federal Reserve System and monetary policy, and she spent the next 3 years applying her economic knowledge with wonderful results.

Karma won more than 45 major teaching awards at the Foster School, including the first PACCAR Award for Excellence in Teaching, the school's highest faculty honor. Her twice-annual economic forecast lectures became a standing-room-only tradition. And her 1995 textbook, "Contemporary Money, Banking and Financial Markets: Theory and Practice," co-authored with her husband, Michael Hadjimichalakis, became an influential classic.

Former students universally spoke of themselves as "privileged" and "blessed" to have had the opportunity to study under Karma. They told of her ability to decipher data with real-life examples to make macroeconomics fascinating, even fun. They spoke of her profound impact on their lives. As one of Karma's students, class of 2002, I wanted to add my own testimony to her impact.

When I was a student, learning under an experienced and dedicated professor such as Karma was one of the best parts of the University of Washington's eMBA program. In all of her classes, Karma went above and beyond the call of duty, not just to present the course

material, but to make herself available to us outside of the classroom, to answer our questions and ensure our understanding and application of the course work. She challenged my study of economics and how to craft successful public policies in a free market economy. Quite simply, they don't come any better.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Karma Hadjimichalakis for her four decades of excellent teaching, communicating knowledge with absolute generosity, boundless energy, and endearing warmth. Karma's impact on thousands of students will endure for decades and in ways we will never completely know. And she will always have a special place in my heart.

ATTACK ON MIDDLE CLASS AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a very serious and dangerous attack on middle class Americans being waged by the Republicans in the Congress and in Statehouses across the country.

The Wisconsin Governor's assault on public employees is getting most of the media attention, but it is just one of the fronts of the extreme right wing and anti-worker agenda trying to be carried out in this country. In fact, there is a well-financed and coordinated national attack against working families and the unions that they may belong to, the goal of which is to take away power from the middle class and give it to the wealthy special interests that have backed Republicans in their elections.

Here is how it is playing out: The Republicans are taking a real problem, a serious problem—budget deficits and long-term debt in this country—and they are assigning to it a fake cause. Under the guise of cutting deficits they say that working people's union rights and workplace protections must be eliminated. In fact, this attack against working people is designed to remove the vital check on special interest corporate power from overrunning our democracy.

This is an extreme agenda that they have always pursued, but they are now using their newfound political power to relaunch the attacks, to attack the guarantee to a decent wage, to attack the rights to ensure a safe workplace so when the workers leave home in the morning they know they will return safely at night.

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They attack the rights to have access to affordable health care and secure retirement. And yes, they're even attacking the rights of working people to join together to bargain for a better life and better conditions in the workplace.

So at the same time that the Governors of Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, and